

INSOLVENCY LEGISLATION.

A Private Member Introduces a Bill.

It is said to Have the Support of Business Men Generally—Premier Laurier's Views Upon the Subject.

There seems to exist a variety of opinion regarding the question of reviving in some form the old Insolvent Law. Mr. Fortin (Laval) introduced a bill respecting insolvency last week. In outlining its main provisions he said that ever since the repeal of the old law in 1875 the agitation for the passage of equitable Dominion legislation on this line had been urged. In a matter of this importance the law should be the same for the entire Dominion. The present bill was the product of the Montreal Board of Trade. In its main provisions it followed the measure proposed by Sir Mackenzie Bowell in 1894. It is proposed that all assignments shall be compulsory. The measure will not be applicable to farmers or professional men. A liquidator is to be appointed and the insolvent is required to render all information and assistance possible.

Mr. Bourassa supported the bill, and Messrs. Angers and Monk also spoke in favor of it.

The Premier Speaks.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said the government, before announcing its policy, would learn the sense of the House. He added: In so far as I have been able to follow the outline of the provisions of this bill, I think we may all agree that if we are to have an insolvency law, it would be difficult to prepare a better measure than the one submitted to the House. Of course it may not be absolutely perfect in all its details. I cannot for my part, reluctantly as I have to say it, accept the compliment which was paid us a moment ago by Mr. Monk when he said that the government would be better able to devise a law of this nature than a private member. As I value such a compliment coming from one who is not overburdened with confidence in the government, still I cannot accept it altogether. The remark which should have been introduced by the government, under their consideration some months. Indeed, it is not new, for the late government considered it also and prepared a measure.

THE NEXT TO MAKE IT A GOVERNMENT MEASURE.

In so far as the present government is concerned, we have been reluctant to make this a government measure, for the reason that it is to be apprehended

(that the moment the government did so, it might be treated as a political measure, and above all things such a bill should be treated not as a political one, but simply from a commercial point of view and from no other. I would recall that the insolvency law which lasted from 1864 down to 1875, and was then reconstructed upon the same lines, was introduced and carried through, not by the government of Sir John Abbott, who at that time was a prominent supporter of the administration, but was not in the cabinet. That measure was introduced by Sir John Abbott, and was carried through as we know with the assistance of the government, but not as a ministerial measure.

PREVIOUS LEGISLATION.

In 1875 the government of Mr. Mackenzie undertook to recast that law, and they proposed the new bill as a ministerial measure. From that moment, as we all remember, without looking into the motives which dictated what took place, the bill was treated as a political question, and made one of the grounds of attack against the administration in the elections of 1878. There is a division of opinion as to whether or not there should be an insolvency law applying to the whole of Canada. What must be a prominent feature in every insolvency act, namely, the discharge of the debtor from his liability, is of course included in this bill, but the provision is inserted that the debts of non-traders—that is to say, farmers and mechanics and so on, are not to be affected by this law. If, as a result of the insolvency law, a trader can obtain a discharge from his liability, that discharge is not to apply under this bill to the debts he may owe to non-traders, such as farmers, mechanics and professional men. Perhaps this will remove a feature from the insolvency law which up to this time to my certain knowledge has been held to be an almost insuperable difficulty in passing such a measure. It is always an invidious thing to deprive a man of his assets, but this

LAW OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

in this respect are, I believe, superior to the laws of any other province, and if the principles that prevail in that province were accepted by all the other provinces, there would perhaps be the less necessity for such a measure as this. If a debtor is in such a state that his assets are not sufficient to meet his liabilities, he cannot make any contract whereby he would deprive any of his creditors of the right of sharing, share and share alike, in the estate with all other creditors. In some of the other provinces, a man can make an assignment and give a preference to some of his creditors whom he chooses to favor, or he may make contracts which will practically make him insolvent, which will deprive himself of all the assets which he has, and leave nothing to the other creditors. Before the Government undertakes to facilitate the passage of the measure, I think we have a right to have an expression of opinion on both sides of the House on the question.

And by these means he calls on the Irish throughout the world to join in preparing a deeper soil for Celtic nationality than has ever been found before, and appeal through it to the heart of mankind. A host of scholars are pouring springing up to carry on this work, the Feis is re-established, and the Gael of the Highlands of Wales, of France and of Ireland are uniting for their common task." Her Excellency was most happy in her peroration.

OUR PHILADELPHIA LETTER.

The Stage from the Standpoint of a Catholic.

Mr. Henry Austin Adams, M.A., at the Winter School.

PHILADELPHIA, March 21, 1898.

The reports of the winter school in New Orleans are again encouraging and tell of success. When we look back on the eight years that have passed since the beginning of 1890 it seems that we have really accomplished a great deal for the every-day life of Catholics that are in the world of the day, but not of it, as the non-Catholic world prides itself on being in it and of it. Catholics have nobly proved that, when the time arrived for it, they were capable of showing themselves up-to-date quite as eagerly and earnestly, and far more sensibly, than the freest thinker among them. For Catholics know that there are and must ever be limits to thought and science, and they are not to be hurried blindly into the adoption of every new dream or theory or idle vision, frantically forced upon their notice by the dreamer, the theorist or the visionary. But they can think, and they like to think, and they are ready to think deeply. The summer schools and the winter schools have gathered in so many, and found so many interested and able to study out the questions brought before them, that the weakest and most timid among us are feeling that, after all, we have a right to help to set the mistakes of the past and the errors of the future in all sorts of diverse ways, running easily in the grooves of right thinking and doing. Mr. Henry Austin Adams has done his usual good work at New Orleans. Men have gifts as varied as there are men, and Mr. Adams certainly has in a pre-eminent degree the gift of persuasive speech. Such a lecturer I have never heard, and I have tried many. It is not, perhaps, that he exceeds in his province the charms of other orators, although he has a pleasant and earnest voice, a frank and fearless face, and a thoroughly unobtrusive and delightfully unadorned manner; but he is so earnest, so confident, so sure of your own good intentions. From the very first word he seems to be looking on you with the conviction that you want to know all you can learn of the matter before you, and that he must tell you what he has learned so that you may go on to clearer knowledge, and help him and all the world in your turn. Then he tells what he knows, he is open and truthful as to what he thinks, and for your life you can't think any differently. What an immense power such a lecturer wields! The Creator fitted him for the work he is doing, and he does it well. I have not heard him this year, for he has been at St. Ann's end of the city—miles and miles away from the other end—and I have had so much to do; but I have heard him several times in former years, and I wish I might hear him again without reckoning yet to come. He is as he is.

TREATING THE VEXED QUESTIONS

of theatres and theatre-going before the Winter School, in one of his lectures, and what he said—from the report—was interesting and fearless. He does not hesitate to speak "right out" when he feels that he has cause for plain speech, and when he knows that he is right, and with the Church. The theatre is certainly a wonderful power. Shall it be for good or for evil? There is one thing that leads me to believe that it shall yet—and before long—be a power for good. Did it ever occur to you that it is singular fact all Catholic taste seems to kindle to its deepest interest and greatest ability in the direction of the theatre? Of whatever race, Catholic young people enjoy acting, and delight in seeing a play from the time they are tiny school children. In Catholic schools, in Catholic orphanages, in Catholic "Homes", even in Catholic protectories, the young people enter fully into the spirit of a play, and tread with eager life the narrowest or the widest stage. Mr. Adams says in his lecture that Augustin Daly tells him three-quarters of the theatre-going public in the United States—and that means the most enthusiastic and generous theatre-going public in the world—are Catholics. Think, then, of the responsibility laid in Catholic hands! The theatrical manager provides for the pleasure of the theatre-going public, and as they are pleased, so is the stage tricked out. Let but that Catholic three-quarters of his patrons command it, and a better and a higher style of art must be the result. It is the Catholic who is to "elevate the stage" and there is no other who is so truly fitted for the task as the educated Catholic—educated, that is, in every sense of the word, with heart and mind and soul trained and strengthened by the study of his Faith, of its definitions of right and wrong, its laws of beauty and fitness, and the deeper knowledge it gives him of life and its use and abuse. The rapid advance of the Catholic public in the manifestation of its education—for it was, until recently, too shy and too humble in its showing of its powers—will embolden it to approve or disapprove of the matter presented to amuse it, and

THE STAGE AS A GOOD CATHOLIC WOULD HAVE IT

will lack no element of beauty, pathos, wit, or grandeur. Tragedy and comedy may both or either ennoble character—may uplift and strengthen, refine and

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ALLAN.

OUR OTTAWA LETTER.

Continued from First Page.

the old world for the unsurpassed illuminations and manuscripts, for the finely wrought ornaments of chased metals and precious stones, go spell out the inscriptions on the ancient monuments; go live with her people, and trace the connection of modern folklore with the days when kings and chieftains were as demi gods, and who still haunt the land—by every path they gather, by every old thorn tree they may be found—these shee who still represent that race of great De Danaan magician kings, who, when conquered by the Milesians, retreated to palaces beneath each fairy hill. There they held high court, and from there they sallied forth, sometimes to do good, and to bake and spin and work for mortals while they slept, like their kindred in the Highlands of Scotland, but oftener to do harm and to carry off the young and fair to their fairy abodes.

Do you doubt whether those beliefs still linger? Then you have not lived among the Celts in the Highlands of Scotland or of Ireland; you have not seen them avoid a fairy ring, or speak low when passing the haunts of the brownies or kelpies lest they or the others should hear and be annoyed; you have not seen the care with which certain stones are cherished as means whereby to preserve the children and the cattle from being bewitched; and you have not stood as I have stood, on a wild stony mountain overlooking the troubled waters of the Atlantic, amidst a score of rude, pathetic graves of young men and maidens who had been drowned while crossing over to the mainland, and there heard tell of the golden city which had appeared in a mist of the sea to those who were burying their dead, while strains of weird music filled the air with its pathetic strains:

They bear music in the night, Through the isle of all delight, Flash of beauty's diadem With the white cloud over them.

I speak of these passing superstitions of the present only to remind ourselves how deeply the beliefs of the past have ingrained themselves in the hearts of the Celtic people and how colored their whole lives and environment are with the sense of the supernatural, which is the inheritance of the unknown past. Continuing, she said: And now we come to the god kings of Ireland—the magic working great De Danaan. Again the legend assigns Greece as their birthplace, but they had to fly the land to escape the vengeance of those over whom they had worked their spells, and wandering for generations through Europe they at last arrived on the north coast of Ireland by way of Scandinavia and Caledonia. Arriving there in a thick mist with which they had enveloped themselves, they sent forth a herald to summon the Firbolgs to surrender the country. The result was the four days bloody conflict of Cong, near Sligo, where to this day the country is strewn with graves and grave stones—the Firbolgs were utterly routed and

made to retire to their fortresses in Connaught, whilst their conquerors worked their incantations and rigned in their stead for fully one hundred and fifty years. And this is how these are described: 'Fair haired, vengeful, large; every plunderer, every musical person; the professors of musical and entertaining performances, who are adepts in all Druidical and magical arts; these are the descendants of the Tuatha De Danaan in Erin.' To this race we are indebted for the name of Erin, it being taken from Eri the daughter of the great King Dagda, whilst the baridic names Banba and Ebla were also taken from her two sisters; and to Dagda herself is ascribed the creation of the wonderful burial mound of New Grange on the Blyne—two acres in extent, and its chambers and carved stones and memorials are still intact.

One day the great De Danaans saw a fleet of thirty ships appear on the Atlantic, and although they raised a dense fog to protect themselves, yet the invaders effected a landing and they in their turn demanded the country. Much parleying was the result—much surprise at the possession of a common tongue—much examination of the differences on one another's arms, and finally an arbitrator was chosen—a Druid—from amongst the newcomers. He decided against his own people. Would modern warriors acquiesce readily in such a decision? No sooner had they embarked than the magician De Danaans raised furious winds and tempests which wrecked many of the ships with several of their chieftains. But a remnant escaped, and coming to land, took possession of the country, about 1000 B.C. and established the dynasty which was to reign over Ireland for two thousand years and which claims no less a representative on its throne than Queen Victoria.

I fail not to refer to the heroes and heroines of pre-Christian times, and yet time forbids me even to allude to Machu, of the Golden Hair, and Mevo, the mighty Queen of Connaught, of Ocinlann, the Commander of the Red Branch Knights, Conn, of the Hundred Battles, or Cormac MacArt, the model of majesty, magnificence and beauty, the scholar and the law maker—as well as the warrior Niall, of the Nine Hostages, Finn the Founder of the Fins, and of Laegaire, the last pagan king of the time of St. Patrick, who was buried in pagan fashion, as he lived and died, standing up fully armed with his face set towards his enemies.

To St. Patrick we owe the preservation of so early legendary lore. He loved the old stories which were so loved of the people and which were at that time only passed down orally through the schools of the bards. He directed that they should be preserved for future generations in writing, and when remonstrated with for preserving legends, he consulted his guardian angels, who gave him their approval and bade him continue in his work. After reading one of the "Three Sorrows of Story-telling," which closed with these words: Further, he would have the folk lore, the fairy tales and the traditions of the present day gathered from the lips of those who have preserved it before it be altogether too late.

The Great Au Bon Marche.

1885 and 1886 (Dates) June 21st. Address: 1883 and 1885, Montreal, P. Q.

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the severe distress, amounting to actual famine, which exists in counties Mayo, Galway, Clare, and Kerry. His Lordship makes an appeal, and hopes to be able to send assistance, in company with the cities of Manchester, Salford, and Liverpool, which have already generously contributed. The distress in Ireland represents absolute want of food. Seeds are wanted for the next crop, and in the meantime food and clothing will have to be provided for the poor who are in terrible want.

Death of an Eminent Priest. The death has just been announced of one of the most famous of the Jesuit Fathers of England, in the person of the Rev. William Lare, brother of Archbishop Lyne of Glasgow. The deceased was 75 years of age at the time of his death. The funeral services were most imposing in their character.

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